

From the Counseling Center, Week of April 27, 2020

Dear Families,

Welcome back. We hope your April Vacation provided you with opportunities to relax, unwind, let go, and unplug.

As we return to school for our sixth week of distance-learning, things seem the same, yet different, and evolving. It feels like it's a moving target, trying to keep track of where we are and what we're doing in this new way of living. But one thing that can be helpful to know is that school continues, and there's some comfort with this consistency and structure.

There's also the ongoing need to acknowledge that these days, weeks, and months are trying. We're not used to going week-by-week in our learning, to not seeing our friends and family, to being isolated from our communities. So as we come back to school for our final Spring quarter of the year, we wanted to say that we really appreciate how everyone as a community is doing their best to work with the resources and limitations that we have, given our circumstances.

We're in this together and for this last leg of our school year 2019-2020 marathon, let's be sure we're taking care of ourselves, checking in with each other, and staying focused on the goal of putting one foot in front of the other, and keeping in the race. The counselors and social workers are here as resources so please reach out to us. We'd love to hear from you; let us know if we can be helpful in any way from serving as a sounding board, helping to strategize challenges, or putting you in touch with community resources. Take care ~

Below is an article to help parents with our teenagers emotional well-being and how parents can offer support, from respected psychologist Lisa Damour:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/21/well/family/coronavirus-teenagers-uncomfortable-emotions.html?referringSource=articleShare>

Area Resources (next page):

Area Resources

- **Peer Support Text Hotline for TEENS from NAMI-** There is a new way for teenagers in Maine to get help. The Maine chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has launched a teen text support line, offering mental health support. Anyone 14 to 20 years old can text (207) 515-8398 (TEXT) from noon until 10 p.m. each day. The line is for adolescents who may need additional mental health support with a safe space to talk with another young person. Staff providing support via the Teen Text Line are between 19 and 23 years of age. The Teen Text Line is not a crisis line. If you believe that you or someone you know could be in crisis, please do not hesitate to connect with the Maine Crisis Line via phone or text at (888) 568-1112.



- **New Resource for Meals:** Pathway Vineyard Church in Brunswick offers free weekly meals to anyone in the community on Tuesday's from 5:00-6:00 P.M. The meal is provided through an outdoor to-go/take out service. Pathway Vineyard Church is located at 2 Columbus Drive in Brunswick.
- **Important Changes to M.S.A.D. No. 75 Meal- Please NOTICE that Bowdoinham Community School has been added back as a site. Breakfast and lunch are NOT NEEDS based. Please come!** This pickup will now include seven days' worth of meals. Each child will receive a large grocery bag filled with seven days of breakfast, lunch, and milk. We will also include cooking/reheating & refrigeration guidelines.
- **Our hours and locations will be as follows:**
 - Mt Ararat Middle School - Wednesdays 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM: PICK-UP IN FRONT BUS LOOP ONLY
 - Bowdoinham Community School- Wednesdays 12:00-1:00PM
 - Bowdoin Central School – Wednesdays 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
 - Harpwell Community School – Wednesdays 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

If you cannot pick up at the designated time frame from 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM, the middle school will have extended hours to accommodate the weekly pickup.
As always, if you have any questions, please contact Katy DiCara, dicarak@link75.org.
- Good Shepherd Food Bank - resources
<https://www.gsfb.org/covid-19-partner-agency-updates/>
- Mid Coast Community Action is a local community agency that provides resources for families that are experiencing economic hardship, and/or have other needs. Please reach out to them to find out about potential resources and supports. They help with

things like fuel assistance, temporary hardship funds, etc. <https://midcoastmainecommunityaction.org/> Tel. 207-442-7963

- Bowdoinham food pantry (open Wednesday 4-6pm, 207-751-7779) <https://bowdoinhamfoodpantry.org>
- MidCoast Hunger Prevention in Brunswick behind Hannaford (12 Tenney Way): <https://www.mchpp.org> Tel. (207) 725-2716.
 - To-go lunches and bread will be offered outside the eastern entrance Monday-Friday from 11-12:30 and Saturday from 12-1:30.
 - Pre-packed Food Pantry grocery boxes will be made available to clients outside the Food Bank doors Tuesday 11am-2pm and 4pm-6pm, Wednesday from 11am-2pm, Friday from 11am-2pm, and Saturday from 12pm-3pm.

Emergency Situations

Should you or your child experience an emergency of any kind at any time of day while the schools are temporarily closed, we encourage you to utilize the following community resources:

- For mental health emergencies: **Crisis Hotline (1-888-568-1112)**;
- National Crisis Text Line: **Text HOME to 741741**
- For learning how to access resources: **211Maine (211)**; <https://211maine.org>
- For domestic violence-related support: **New Hope for Women (1-800-522-3304)**
- For emergencies: **Call 911**

Non-emergency Situation

For all non-emergency situations, counselors and social workers can be reached at the following email addresses:

Danielle Hiltz (Carrabassett, Sebasticook, Merrymeeting, and Kennebec (Burns and Cherry homerooms): hiltzd@link75.org;

Maura Bannon: (Cathance, Kennebec (Feiss and Obery homerooms): bannonm@link75.org;

Mary Ellen Lagasse: Magalloway, Androscoggin, and Casco Teams: lagassem@link75.org;

Special Education Social Workers: Annie Valliere: vallierea@link75.org; **Matt Howard**: howardm@link75.org; and **Carrie Larson** larsonc@link75.org.